



## ***Nevada Veterans Services Commission Meeting Minutes***

**Date:** March 20, 2007

**Western Nevada Community College – 2201 West College  
Parkway – Carson City, NV – Reynolds Bldg – Rm #102**

### **Invocation**

### **Prayer**

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

### **Roll Call**

**Present:** Brad Benson  
William Baumann  
Ronald Gutzman  
Stan Jones  
Joanne Molen  
Margaret Puccinelli

**Absent:** Assemblywoman Kathy McClain  
Senator Terry Care  
Michael Downey

### **Guest and representative introduction:**

Tony Vaughn – American Legion Department of Nevada Commander  
David Baird – Team Leader – Reno Vet Center  
Gary Bermeosolo – Administrator – Nevada State Veterans Home  
Darnell Bennett – Assistant Administrator – Nevada State Veterans Home  
Tim Tetz – Executive Director – Nevada Office of Veterans Services  
Carole Turner – Deputy Director – Nevada Office of Veterans Services  
Jack Porrino – Superintendent – Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery  
Wes Block – Superintendent – Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery  
DeeDra Cornelius – Executive Assistant to the Director - Nevada Office of Veterans Services

### **Approval of this meeting's agenda:**

Ronald Gutzman– Made a motion to accept the agenda

Joanne Molen – Motion was seconded

Decision: Unanimous consent document will stand as written

**Approval of minutes from last meeting:**

William Baumann – Made a motion to accept the minutes

Ronald Gutzman – Motion was seconded

Decision: Unanimous consent document will stand as written

**Nevada State Veterans Home Administrator Report:**

Report given by Gary Bermeosolo – Nevada State Veterans Home Administrator

(All items and charts can be found in section 2 of the Commission book)

**Overview:**

1. Breakdown of NSVH resident population
2. Dispersed 353 admission applications and admitted 31 new residents
3. Current census 172, 5 regular beds available, and 3 isolation beds available
4. Two clinical surveys each year, (1) VA survey in the spring, (2) State Board of Licensure and Certification in the fall
5. State issues an average of 12 citations per survey, while the national average is 8, the home received only 3
6. VA notified the home they have been awarded the federal grant for the central dining room expansion; however construction costs have increased creating a shortfall in the State's matching portion
7. Working with State Public Works Board to gain approval of a second CIP request to add funds to the grant award
8. Pathways creating dangerous situations so NSVH is utilizing Gift Account funds to concrete the gravel paths in the Peace Gardens
9. Billings and collections continue to exceed budgeted levels and aging receivables are down by 50% from a year ago
10. Continuing to address faulty construction of the twenty-five showers
11. The home's Administrator and Director of Nursing Services attended the annual National Association of State Veterans Homes' Winter Conference
12. Public Relations Committee continues to focus on the Facility-wide communications plan to insure interest in the Home remains high
13. Nevada Veterans Assistance League made it possible for each resident to receive a holiday gift and their year-end appeal resulted in donations, including the first \$2,500 gift, which is earmarked for their Room Sponsorship Program; a new brochure summarizing NVAL's mission and gifting opportunities is now available

**Significant Communication:**

(All items and charts can be found in section 2 of the Commission book)

**Letters: (0)**

**Medical Staff Update**

**PR: Veterans Olympics honors veterans – our national treasures**

**PR: Veteran remembers being there when Pearl Harbor was attacked**

**PR: Soldier received three Bronze Stars for service**

**PR: Veterans groups hosting memorial service Dec. 7**

**Budget Report:**

Report given by Darnell Bennett – Assistant Administrator – NSVH – Boulder City

**Overview:**

1. Budget was presented to legislators
2. Budget is in tact for the Veterans Home
3. Asking for 5 new positions at the home; 2 LPN's, 2 Activity Aides, and 1 Occupational Therapist
4. NOVS budget had to be reduced
5. Focusing on money for operations
6. The Agency has been made aware recently; prior gifts of monetary value given to the cemeteries, which were not specified for a particular item, were being pulled into funding as a gift to the Agency
7. There is no gift account at the Agency level; therefore the gift money was supplementing the Agency income and this practice is to cease and desist immediately
8. Monies brought in for the cemeteries will stay at the cemeteries
9. A gift account for the care of veterans and for outreach is in the works but until such time it is created, the Agency cannot receive gifted funds
10. Approximately \$30,000.00 of gifted monies funded the Agency's budget
11. Public Relations position removed from the 12 positions asked for
12. Reno financial position moved to Boulder City which combined the 3 financial positions, Ace Tan did not agree to the move and left the position
13. Three person fiscal team will oversee the fiscal operations of the entire Agency
14. The extra fiscal person they had is coming to Reno to fill in the position of Personnel Officer I to oversee the bigger picture of personnel items and planning
15. Legislation is being asked to approve a final 7 positions; Trinity team in NE Nevada (possibly Elko) consisting of 2 VSO's and 1 AA, 1 AA for the SNVMC, 1 AA for the Trinity Team in Las Vegas, 1 VSO and 1 AA for the Churchill County office

Volunteers a possibility until positions are approved; need to look at insurance for them, maybe under worker's comp

**Cemetery Superintendent Reports:****Northern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery**

Report given by Wes Block – Cemetery Superintendent

(All items and charts can be found in section 3 of the Commission book)

**Overview:**

1. 4958 Veterans and Dependents interred at the cemetery
2. Included in the total is 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. James Jeffery Cathey, KIA – Iraq
3. Memorials placed for CW3 John Michael Flynn and Sgt. Patrick Dana Stewart – both KIA – Afghanistan
4. All allocated positions in personnel are filled at this time

5. Currently working with the Lyon County Sheriff's Office, receiving several community service workers per month; the program is working out very well with 350 + hours applied since July 06 to present
6. Dry winter forced cemetery to irrigate the grounds off and on earlier than normal to keep losses of vegetation at a minimum, which will affect the water budget
7. Incorporating new rotational type heads as replacements for all spray type sprinklers to conserve water
8. Hoping to receive approval funds for CIP projects that will effect repairs and preventative maintenance to the cemetery road system, including repairing cracks, re-sealing, and re-stripping to meet ADA parking standards.
9. Seeking funds to repair the pavilion as the cement sections have become uneven, which could result in a tripping hazard
10. On schedule with the acquisition of a new mower, and if the requested equipment is approved this Legislative session the cemetery will be able to replace a tractor that is 17 years old and well beyond the serviceable life; also replace a 12 year old utility cart
11. Korean War Veterans Association is in final planning stages for a Memorial to be placed at the cemetery
12. Local VFW, American Legion, and Lyon County Peace Officers are in the preliminary stages of a project to install larger flag poles in a more prominent location within the cemetery, providing greater visibility

### **Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery**

Report given by Jack Porrino – Cemetery Superintendent

(All items and charts can be found in section 3 of the Commission book)

#### **Overview:**

1. Receiving a new 6 passenger guest vehicle
2. Ordering a liquid sprayer for weed control
3. Finally received a brand new truck, not an old NDOT truck
4. \$169,000 in the last 4 years brought in by donated funds which has helped in purchasing needed items for the cemetery
5. Equipment is slowly being replaced
6. A maintenance building is in the works for SNVMC
7. Working in the new section of the cemetery; people are still opting to go into the ground rather than into the columbariums
8. A-1 section, singles and doubles are gone already; approximately 5 years to go
9. SNVMC will be going on the national list this year
10. Exit from cemetery is an issue at this time; city is not budging on letting the cemetery put their exits in before they build the roads going to the main cross streets
11. Water issue continues
12. May 5<sup>th</sup> ceremony retiring the flags
13. May 26<sup>th</sup> flags go out on each grave
14. May 27<sup>th</sup> Special Forces have their ceremony
15. May 28<sup>th</sup> will be the Memorial Day ceremony

16. Jack agreed to get 1 bugler to play @ 11:00 AM for Echo Taps on June 19, 2007

**NOVS Service Officer Program:**

Report given by Carole Turner – Executive Deputy Director – NOVS – Las Vegas

In absence of Jeanette Rae – Service Officer Program Manager – NOVS – Reno

**Overview:**

1. Went to the American Legion national training in February of 2007; they have a free training opportunity for the appeals process, although we would have to provide the salary of the employee that we send
2. Training available is either 30 or 60 days; currently have room for only 1 person at this time
3. Recommend that NOVS withdraws their representation for the Military Order of the Purple Heart; they now have their own paid national service officer in Las Vegas; Tim agreed to discuss this offline
4. Accreditation applications will be sent in this week for both Kelly Awtrey and Emma Williams-Love; Emma had sent hers in and the paperwork is now unable to be located, she has re-accomplished the paperwork and Jeanette will be sending that information post-haste
5. Working on replacement of the Administrative Assistant for the Reno Trinity Team

**Women Veterans Coordinator Report:**

Report given by Kelly Awtrey – Women Veterans Coordinator

(All items and charts can be found in section 3 of the Commission book)

**Overview:**

1. Kelly was on the VA committee to host a Women Veterans Health Fair Seminar, which was held in Reno on November 3, 2006; it was a success with approximately 99 women attending and 75 responding to the VA survey
2. Kelly attended the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Women Veterans Military History Luncheon in Las Vegas on March 2, 2007, hosted by the Women Veterans of Nevada; generated an opportunity to add to the database and generate several contacts within the southern Nevada region
3. Recently obtained the women veterans report from the VA in Reno, which has 1971 names on its list she intends to send letters of introduction to
4. Kelly looks forward to working closely with Carole Turner, the new Deputy Director of NOVS, to develop strategies to better serve the women veterans
5. Kelly plans to attend the 8<sup>th</sup> National Association of State Women Veterans Coordinators Conference, May 14, 2007 through May 18, 2007

**Guardianship Program Status Report:**

(All items and charts can be found in section 3 of the Commission book)

**Cemetery Water Usage Information:**

(All items and charts can be found in section 3 of the Commission book)

**Cemetery Gift Account Report:**

(All items and charts can be found in section 3 of the Commission book)

**Deputy Director Report**

Report given by Carole Turner – Executive Deputy Director

(All items and charts can be found in section 3 of the Commission book)

**Overview:**

1. Carole Turner was introduced by Tim Tetz as our new Executive Deputy Director
2. Carole gave her background and impressions of the position
3. Carole will have a report to enter at the next Commission meeting

**Executive Director Report:**

Report given by Tim Tetz – Executive Director

(All items and charts can be found in section 4 of the Commission book)

**Overview:**

1. Memorandum of the near and long-term future of NOVS as it relates to staff
2. Letters (2)
3. Public Relations:
  - a. Veterans: Plans made for new museum
  - b. Veterans center, museum abandoned
  - c. Echo Taps Worldwide
  - d. Understanding Post Deployment Stress Symptoms
  - e. Nevada Office of Veterans Services Discusses Agenda
  - f. Veterans Museum A Long-Range Possibility
  - g. Gibbons Indicates Tetz Will Stay
  - h. Press Release: Gibbons Appoints New Deputy Director for the Nevada Office of Veterans Services
  - i. News Release: VA Partnering with States to Help Injured Veterans
4. Compensation and Pension graphs
5. Reorganization:
  - a. Trinity Team: name is being used to be diligent in communicating that we need 2 VSO's and an AA in each area
  - b. Changes have been made as to who does what evaluations and the direct lines of reporting
  - c. Jeanette Rae has been asked to reissue the internal organization chart in an attempt to get everyone on the same page
  - d. Jeanette Rae is now the Veterans Service Program Manager; she oversees all of the veteran service programs outside of the cemeteries and the veterans home and will report directly to Tim Tetz

**FY 2006-2007 Budget Overview**

(All items and charts can be found in section 5 of the Commission book)

**Governor's Recommended Budget**

(All items and charts can be found in section 5 of the Commission book)

**Various Statements of Tim Tetz, Executive Director , NOVS**

(All items and charts can be found in section 5 of the Commission book)

**NOVS FY 2008 – 2009 Budget Summary**

(All items and charts can be found in section 5 of the Commission book)

**Bill Draft Requests of Interest**

(All items and charts can be found in section 5 of the Commission book)

**Legislative Initiative Summary Sheets**

(All items and charts can be found in section 5 of the Commission book)

**Legislative Session Issue Chart**

(All items and charts can be found in section 5 of the Commission book)

**Report from VA Regional Office (Reno)**

(All items and charts can be found in section 6 of the Commission book)

**Disabled American Veterans Report**

(All items and charts can be found in section 6 of the Commission book)

**DAV Wheelchair Reports**

(All items and charts can be found in section 6 of the Commission book)